

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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State Fire Marshal Increases Training Emphasis to Rural Areas

The Washington State Fire Marshal's Emergency Mobilization Division has begun an aggressive approach to providing Hazardous Materials Awareness training in Washington, focusing on rural areas of the state as well as with tribal communities.

"We decided upon a major outreach effort when it became apparent that certain parts of our state lacked the general basic training in hazardous materials response," explained Washington State Deputy Fire Marshal Ron Bowen. "Our mission is to prepare our communities so that in the event of any hazardous materials emergency, people will be prepared and will know how to handle the situation to protect our citizens," he said.

The course, about four hours in length, teaches basic information on the nine different hazard classes. Transportation methods and use of the Emergency Response Guidebook are also taught.

Classes have been given in Twisp and Tonasket and to public works officials and county sheriff's offices throughout the state. They have also been given to the Nisqually and Chehalis Tribes. Members of the Swinomish Tribe have also participated in trainings.

Statewide, the Emergency Mobilization Division has trained 985 students since October 1, 2002.

"As word gets out that this training is just a phone call away, we foresee a large jump in requests," Bowen explained. For information, contact Ron Bowen, Deputy State Fire Marshal, at (360) 753-0357.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol.

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